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OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21

Letter dated 8 April 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to inform you that the Rio +5 Forum, an important international event related to the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 and also to the informal preparation of the coming special session of the General Assembly on this issue, was held in Rio de Janeiro from 13 to 19 March 1997.

Since Brazil was the host country of the event, I would greatly appreciate it if the attached summary of the results of the Forum** could be issued as a document of the Assembly at its nineteenth special session.

(Signed) Celso L. N. AMORIM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Brazil to the United Nations

* A/S-19/1 (to be issued).

** Attached in the language of submission only.

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ANNEX

Summary of the results of the Rio +5 Forum

1. This summary of the results of the Rio +5 Forum does not purport to be comprehensive. It represents the attempt by the Chairman to present the highlights of the Forum rather than his own personal views, and is supplemented by the more detailed reports that are available.

2. As a contribution to the fifth anniversary review of the results of the Earth Summit mandated by the General Assembly, the Earth Council, in cooperation with a broadly representative group of other organizations and stakeholders, convened the Rio +5 Forum in Rio de Janeiro from 13 to 19 March 1997. The Forum was honoured to have the participation of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil as Honourary Chairman, and the full support of his Government, as well as that of the State and the City of Rio de Janeiro and non-governmental organizations/business and other leaders of Brazilian society. Funding and substantive support from a number of other governmental and non-governmental sources made an indispensable contribution to the Forum.

3. The theme of the Rio +5 Forum was "Moving from Agenda to Action". It was the culmination of an ambitious year-long process designed to revitalize the sustainable development movement by building on the experience gained and lessons learned from the successes achieved since the Earth Summit and seek ways to remove the obstacles to action that continue to impede progress.

4. At the Earth Summit, countries of the world, most of them represented by their principal leaders, adopted a number of accords, principally the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 as the programme for giving effect to it, framework conventions on climate change and biological diversity, and a statement on forestry principles and laid the foundations for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. In addition, at the Global Forum, a number of "treaties" were agreed expressing the commitments of various sectors of civil society.

5. Five years later, it is apparent that despite these commitments and the accompanying publicity, the basic concept of sustainable development is not yet well understood and the policies and structures required to implement the Earth Summit agreements are still not in place. The good news is that there is a great deal of good news; the bad news is that there is not enough of it. Despite progress made on many fronts as evidenced at Rio +5, the world community has still not made the fundamental transition to a development pathway that will provide the human community with a sustainable and secure future. Environmental deterioration continues and the forces that drive it persist.

6. One of the major impediments to more progress is the fact that many of the organizations and individuals working for sustainability in their own communities and sectors continue to work largely in isolation from one another. Rio +5 was designed to bring together a representative group of these "actors", to help forge new links and alliances among them across disciplines, sectors,

and institutional and national boundaries so that their successes can be multiplied and they can combine efforts to remove and overcome barriers to the achievement of sustainable development.

7. In preparation for Rio +5, the Earth Council invited a broadly representative cross-section of stakeholders with expertise and involvement in sustainable development action to review their own experience and submit papers based on that experience on specific topics as background for the Forum and a contribution to the overall fifth anniversary review process. As it would not have been feasible to make participation in the Rio +5 Forum comprehensive, every effort was made to make it as representative as possible of key civil society actors and constituencies.

8. Parallel with this, Rio +5 partner organizations cooperated to set up a series of national and international multi-stakeholder consultations. This process produced more than 70 special focus reports and 80 reports from national and regional consultations, providing a rich and diverse source of information about progress, and lack of progress, in implementing the Earth Summit agreements, lessons learned from these experiences and crucial factors that drive and hinder implementation of sustainability. Thus, Rio +5 was not simply another meeting, but the focal point of a process designed to use this fifth anniversary review occasion as an opportunity to revitalize the action process, produce new alliances for action among civil society stakeholders and help stimulate renewed impetus to action on the part of Governments and intergovernmental organizations.

9. Against this background, the International Steering Committee for Rio +5, through the Earth Council, brought together in Rio de Janeiro some 500 knowledgeable and committed people from all parts of the world for six days of intensive plenary and workshop sessions. National Councils for Sustainable Development, of which some 100 have been established since the Earth Summit, constituted a primary constituency for the Forum and made an especially important contribution to it.

10. Participants brought with them an enormous range of experience in their national councils, in community-based organizations, local authorities, business and industry, science, technology and research institutes, non-governmental organization networks, financial institutions, United Nations development agencies, environmental organizations, private investors, philanthropic organizations, and values and educational groups. During the pre-Forum activities and at the Forum itself the Rio +5 process generated a rich harvest of action experiences and plans from many stakeholders featuring innovative and effective strategies to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The results constitute a combination of new insights and reinforcement of past recommendations that have not been fully or adequately carried out, as well as new ideas and recommendations. There was a particular focus on the governance structures, legal and policy frameworks, financial support, and education and consultative processes required to translate promising ideas into action.

11. The Rio +5 process was admittedly a complex and demanding one. This was a deliberate attempt to recognize that the issues we must address if we are to

succeed in the transition to sustainable development are intrinsically complex and systemic in nature, and if we are to deal with them effectively our action and consultative processes must reflect that reality. The Rio +5 process was designed as an experiment in doing this, providing the framework for viewing on an integrated basis the linkages among the wide range of issues that must be managed interactively to produce sustainable development and dialogue among leading actors in respect of these issues. As consensus already exists at a general level on many key issues, the Forum concentrated on the diversity of perspectives and actions by various stakeholders. Its principal outputs were the substantive, in-depth insights, affirmations and recommendations emerging from the pre-Forum activities and the Forum workshops, the practical action alliances that were developed as a result of the process and the inputs to the deliberations of Governments that are reflected in the report of Rio +5, which is available together with the related documents to which reference has been made. These documents and the proceedings of Rio +5 are now available on the Earth Council's Internet Web site.

12. A copy of the summary version of the report Subsidizing Unsustainable Development - Undermining the Earth with Public Funds, prepared by the Institute for Research on Public Expenditure of the Netherlands commissioned by the Earth Council, with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, has recently been released and is also available.

13. Some of the major conclusions, actions by stakeholders and recommendations to Governments that emerged from the Rio +5 Forum are summarized below.

A. Major conclusions

14. There is a critical need for greater multi-stakeholder participation to integrate the social, economic and ecological dimensions of sustainable development into specific policies, programmes and actions.

15. Sustainable development is still predominantly the domain of environmental ministries. Other government departments, particularly those dealing with economic and social policy, must become involved. This has important implications for the Commission on Sustainable Development, which has made notable progress but needs to include more representatives of finance and economic ministries.

16. The principal driving forces of economic activity - unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in industrialized countries and population growth in developing countries - are still the major contributors to our current unsustainable course. North American participants declared that their current production and patterns are morally and ecologically unsustainable.

17. There is a need to address the fundamental ethical imperatives of sustainable development through the Earth Charter. A firm commitment on the part of all nations and peoples to a new integrated ethical vision is essential if humanity is to achieve the goal of sustainability and ensure the well-being of people and the larger community of life on Earth.

18. There is a need to make the difficult transition from managing sectoral issues to integrated management systems.

19. Governments are currently subsidizing unsustainable development ($700 billion a year in energy, agriculture and water alone). Large amounts of financial resources could become available for supporting sustainability if harmful subsidies are removed and positive incentives for sustainable development provided.

20. The information revolution is creating a new kind of impoverishment (Africa's capacity for electronic communication is growing at 6 per cent a year while the rate in Asia and Europe is about 20 per cent).

21. International accords are in danger of becoming external interventions unrelated to the organic needs of national and local communities in developing countries.

22. There are many successful cases of sustainable development practices which must be multiplied.

23. Local Agenda 21 efforts need to be better integrated with national Agenda 21 frameworks for sustainable development.

24. Private philanthropy and private investment, which are now the main source of development resources, must be better focused and integrated in an efficient delivery system for sustainable development.

25. The current United Nations system is not able to enforce compliance with international accords, which must be more deeply rooted in local and national support.

B. Major actions and affirmations by stakeholders

26. Agreement was reached at the first meeting of the Earth Charter Commission on a "benchmark" draft Earth Charter to be used as the basis for extensive dialogue and consultations by people and organizations throughout the world to produce a "people's" Earth Charter, which would be submitted to the United Nations for appropriate recognition and action by Governments in the year 2000. It builds on the Declarations of Stockholm and Rio and the many other processes that have produced relevant ethical statements, particularly the Covenant of the World Conservation Union. A copy of this benchmark draft and summary report of the Earth Charter Commission meeting is available.

27. It is encouraging to note that World Environment Day celebrations in Seoul on this anniversary year will focus especially on the issue of environmental ethics.

28. All participants affirmed their commitment to ensuring the mainstreaming of gender issues, full participation of youth in all sustainable development processes as well as special measures to ensure the participation of indigenous

peoples and the mobilization of support for the issues of particular concern to them.

29. Participants affirmed the priority that must be accorded to eliminating the dire and debilitating poverty that continues to afflict so many of the world's people and to the incorporation of specific measures to ensure this in sustainable development policies and practices.

30. The nearly 70 consultations organized by civil society actors in partnership with Governments (in most cases National Councils for Sustainable Development or similar multi-stakeholder groups) produced a number of specific affirmations and recommendations for national and local sustainable development, including the following:

(a) Commitment by the President of the World Bank and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme in support of civil society participation in sustainable development through National Councils for Sustainable Development;

(b) Affirmation by the World Travel and Tourism Council, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the Earth Council, of their Agenda 21 for the travel and tourism industry;

(c) Affirmation by the World Federation of Engineering Organizations of their commitment to integrate and support sustainable development principles in their professional work, complemented by their report on the engineers' response to sustainable development;

(d) On the initiative of Energy 21, initiation of a campaign to enlist at least 1 million communities worldwide in programmes to improve energy efficiency by 25 per cent or more by the year 2001;

(e) Initiation of a process for improved consultation and cooperation among governmental and private donors to provide new and more effective financial support for local and national sustainable development initiatives;

(f) Development of a framework and enhanced linkages to facilitate cooperation and consultation among the growing network of National Councils for Sustainable Development and the establishment and strengthening of regional alliances, as for example in Central America and the Southern Cone countries of South America and in Asia as a parallel forum to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum;

(g) Examples from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development of progress by business in practical actions to implement sustainable development and affirmation of its commitment to continued progress as evidenced by the signing at Rio +5 of a memorandum of agreement between the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Programme;

(h) Affirmation by the International Road Transport Union of the commitment of its members to a sustainable development charter based on Agenda 21;

(i) Agreement signed in Rio de Janeiro between community-based initiatives of the Joint Institute for Social Aid (IMAS), located in Costa Rica, and the Earth Council;

(j) Affirmation of civil society support for the United Nations Environment Programme as a basis for a strengthened world environmental organization within the United Nations with a status equivalent to an international economic and trade organization;

(k) Affirmation of the value and importance of continuing on a periodic basis, global consultations among civil society actors for sustainable development building on the Rio +5 experience and the proposal made by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro for the establishment of a Rio forum.

C. Recommendations to Governments and others

31. Specific recommendations for implementing sustainability emerged from the working sessions at the Rio +5 Forum. Like the recommendations for managing the various subsystems of sustainable development that were submitted in more than 70 technical papers and 80 national and subregional consultations, they were based on the experience of attempting to implement sustainability.

32. A primary need identified by the Forum is to provide better mechanisms and policy instruments for translating the agreements reached at Rio and subsequent experience and recommendations into effective action at local, national and sectoral levels. They must be transformed into a more coherent and consistent set of policies, legal frameworks, fiscal and budgetary processes, institutional mechanisms, and communication and educational programmes. To support the establishment and strengthening of these mechanisms, the following is a summary of the principal recommendations made:

(a) That the United Nations and Governments take note of and lend support to the civil society Earth Charter process. The Earth Council Commission, at its first meeting, agreed on a "benchmark" Earth Charter draft to be a focal point for the extensive dialogue and consultations that will now be undertaken by civil society groups throughout the world;

(b) That Governments facilitate and support formation of multi-stakeholder mechanisms to develop local Agendas 21;

(c) In particular, that Governments support the further establishment and strengthening of National Councils for Sustainable Development and similar mechanisms to develop and implement national Agendas 21 that link local with national sustainability actions and contribute to regional and global cooperation;

(d) That Governments and international organizations support the establishment by National Councils for Sustainable Development of regional forums to contribute to the incorporation of sustainable development measures in regional trade and investment accords;

(e) That international development agencies and financial institutions develop new and more effective delivery systems to ensure local and national sustainability and the democratic and transparent use of resources;

(f) That despite current budgetary austerity, donor Governments and agencies provide new and additional concessional funding required to support the transition to sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 21 by developing countries, particularly the least developed;

(g) That the Global Environment Facility be replenished at a higher level with an expanded mandate;

(h) That the United Nations and its Member States provide full and strong support to the United Nations Environment Programme and to building on its foundations a world environment organization with more effective monitoring, assessment and early warning functions as the bridge between science, policy and international law in the environment field, the principal source of the environmental dimension of the sustainable development nexus and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, with a status and strength equivalent to that of the international economic and trade organizations. The Nairobi Declaration provides a promising starting point for this and the measures at the resumed session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to establish new mechanisms to carry out its governance functions should also prove to be a positive step in this direction;

(i) That the General Assembly make provision for appropriate participation in its deliberative and negotiating processes to all relevant major stakeholders which can contribute to the formation of international accords and facilitate support for their national and local implementation;

(j) That industrialized countries agree at the forthcoming meetings of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent from 1990 levels by the year 2005;

(k) That corporations be more accountable to the communities in which they operate as well as to society in general;

(l) That Governments initiate a negotiating process to establish a global framework for the regulation of international capital flows;

(m) That Governments agree to review and reorient the system of incentives and subsidies by which they motivate the economic behaviour of corporations and citizens to eliminate subsidies and other incentives that encourage and support unsustainable development practices, particularly in respect of energy, transport, agriculture and water, and provide positive incentives for the achievement of sustainability.

Appendix

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Rio +5 process yielded a number of accomplishments, examples of which are listed below:

1. Local/national sustainability

- Nearly 70 consultations organized by civil society in partnership with Governments (in most cases National Councils for Sustainable Development or similar multi-stakeholder groups) made specific recommendations for national and local sustainable development.

- All participants affirmed their commitment to ensuring the mainstreaming of gender issues, full participation of youth in all sustainable development processes, as well as special measures to ensure the participation of indigenous peoples and the mobilization of support for the issues of particular concern to them.

- Commitment by the President of the World Bank and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to support civil society participation in National Councils for Sustainable Development.

- Initiation of a process for improved consultation and cooperation among governmental and private donors to provide new and more effective support for local and national sustainable development initiatives.

- Publication of the results of an extensive consultation process carried out for Rio +5 by the Brazilian Non-Governmental Organization Forum.

- Agreement between community-based initiatives of the Joint Institute for Social Aid (IMAS), located in Costa Rica, and the Earth Council.

2. Regional sustainability

- Consolidation of a growing network, currently comprising 71 National Councils for Sustainable Development, making use of the opportunity presented by Rio +5 to form regional alliances for sustainable development such as strengthening of the Central American alliance for sustainable development. An NGO-initiated alliance for sustainable development among the Southern Cone countries of South America.

- Commitment of National Councils for Sustainable Development of the Central and Eastern European region to create an alliance for sustainable development to facilitate multi-stakeholder participation in the countries that are still not involved in the process of developing National Councils.

- An NGO-initiated agreement to organize a civil society national council for sustainable development forum in Asia as a parallel forum to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.

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3. Global sustainability

- More than 20 key organizations have committed to conduct a widespread consultation on the Earth Charter draft. An Earth Charter Commission has been established and a draft Earth Charter prepared for review and consultation.

- Participants affirmed the priority that must be accorded to eliminate the dire debilitating poverty that continues to afflict so many of the world's people and to the incorporation of specific measures to ensure this priority in sustainable development policies and practices.

- Agenda 21 for the travel and tourism industry, affirmed by the World Travel and Tourism Council, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the Earth Council, was endorsed by workshop participants.

- The World Federation of Engineering Organizations pledged to integrate and support sustainable development principles in accomplishing their work. This complemented their report on the engineers' response to sustainable development.

- An energy non-governmental organization, Energy 21, produced in-depth research supporting the vital role sustainable energy use must play in achieving sustainability. It also initiated a campaign for 1 million communities worldwide to improve energy efficiency by at least 25 per cent or to substitute environmentally friendly solutions for conventional energy, by the year 2001.

- The World Business Council for Sustainable Development summarized its actions to implement sustainability in the report Signals of Change: Business Progress Towards Sustainable Development. In addition, a memorandum of agreement between the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Programme was signed.

- Affirmation by the International Road Transport Union of the commitment of its members to a sustainable development charter based on Agenda 21.

- Affirmation of civil society support for the United Nations Environment Programme as a basis for a strengthened world environmental organization within the United Nations with a status equivalent to an international economic and trade organization.

- Affirmation of the value and importance of continuing, on a periodic basis, global consultations among civil society actors for sustainable development building on the Rio +5 Forum and the proposal made by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro for the establishment of a Rio forum.

- Initiation of discussions on an ombudsman-like function for sustainable development based on an in-depth study tabled at the Forum.

MANAGING SYSTEMS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Recommendations

At the local level

Social development

- Make the links clear between health, poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies within the local Agenda 21 process.
- Ensure the affordability of basic services, including energy, water and transportation, and use economic instruments to discourage the wasteful and unsustainable use of these resources.
- Fund participatory research to define and clarify sustainable development and identify social, economic and environmental problems and responses at the community level.
- Develop local strategies to assist migrants, the urban poor and other marginalized groups to adapt themselves to their new urban environments.
- Integrate science and traditional and indigenous knowledge for local management of sustainable development.
- Create a social development fund.
- Establish mechanisms to involve youth at the school, neighbourhood and local government level to contribute new ideas to the government process while educating young people about their social and environmental responsibilities.
- Fund mass media campaigns to promote responsible consumption and sustainable living to counteract advertising that stresses consumerism as synonymous with development, progress and achievement.
- Develop new methodologies to identify common interests as an alternative to solving problems in an adversarial way.

Ecosystems and natural resources

- Involve community organizations in the management of national parks and other protected areas.
- Support local people to carry out biodiversity inventories and remunerate the holders of traditional knowledge for their collaboration in protection and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Monitor and publicize local sources of pollution.
- Create multi-stakeholder bodies for local land-use planning, including a monitoring and evaluation component, and link this to planning at the

national level particularly in natural resource areas such as mining, forestry, fisheries and agriculture.

- Seek out new opportunities for community-managed sustainable ecotourism ensuring that the local inhabitants receive a significant share of the benefits. Implement Agenda 21 for travel and tourism.

- Use non-governmental organizations to channel government and external donor funding, including national and international philanthropy, into local development programmes.

- Focus municipal development programme assistance on capacity-building for municipal finance.

- Develop small micro and medium-sized enterprise credit programmes including micro-credit banks based on indigenous knowledge, with private, public and donor funding that supports economically and environmentally viable micro-projects at the community level.

- Develop mechanisms to encourage business to reinvest in local communities.

- Ensure consumer protection and establish legal mechanisms to make institutions liable for the environmental damages that they cause locally.

- Strengthen the financing and revenue-generating capacities of local governments.

Energy

- Establish international protocols among local governments for energy efficiency and waste minimization.

- Campaign for 1 million communities worldwide to improve energy efficiency by at least 25 per cent.

- Strengthen the financing and revenue-generating capacities of local governments.

Agriculture

- Create partnerships between small-scale farmers, women producers and local organizations to achieve sustainable agriculture and food security and encourage diversity of local production.

- Refocus agriculture subsidies to provide incentives for sustainable agriculture practices and to discourage high-input farming.

- Develop programmes to ensure that local and community producers receive a fair share of the proceeds of regional and international trade.

- Build capacity for subsidies and small-scale farmers, particularly women producers, to enhance their opportunities for achieving sustainable livelihoods, including access to credit.

- Review and revise local land-use controls in order to protect agricultural lands and assets.

Science and technology

- Form North-South and South-South community partnerships within the context of local Agenda 21 strategies to share unique knowledge and technologies of all cultures and societies.

Human settlements

- Integrate the Habitat Agenda into local Agenda 21 action plans.

- Design, build and renew sustainable habitats with services such as access to clean water and primary health care.

- Establish local recycling and solid liquid waste minimization programmes.

- Change parking and tax policies to favour the use of public transport and an increase in the use of low-emission vehicles in the transport of goods within and between cities.

- Encourage partnerships between Governments at all levels with civil society.

- Support women's role in human settlements, development and management.

- Support the provisions of micro-lending for shelter improvement.

- Support more equitable access to land to enable the poor to participate in the creation of their own shelter.

- Extend basic urban services to informal settlements.

- Support capacity-building and technical assistance.

- Establish and monitor local targets for environmental health in cities and towns, especially in low-income areas.

Information and communication

- Enable communities to take advantage of information and communication technologies in order to achieve local sustainable development goals.

- Establish networks for the dissemination of effective policies, technologies and approaches to local sustainable development.

- Make an inventory of sustainable development success stories and use local media to publicize them.

- Collect complete technical and financial information about ongoing community projects in a data bank and make it available to local authorities, community groups and non-governmental organizations looking to start their own sustainable development projects or programmes.

- Use mass media programming and advertising in campaigns to raise public awareness about sustainable development.

United Nations agencies, the World Bank, bilateral donors/philanthropy foundations and the Earth Council should prepare a project to undertake an integrated review in selected countries of local, subnational and national legal and fiscal frameworks in order to support the implementation of local sustainable development strategies.

At the national level

Ecosystems and natural resources

- Shift taxation from incomes and payrolls to overuse of natural resources to fill budget shortfalls and move societies towards frill-cost pricing and ecologically sound corporate and individual behaviour.

- Incorporate ecological footprint approach as natural capital accounts to complement gross domestic product, documenting ecological risks and social equity.

- Use a planning approach that links environment and development; conduct environmental impact assessments to determine sustainability of projects at the national level.

- Develop multi-agency programmes to address specific environmental challenges.

Economic development and financial systems

- Reform economic incentive/subsidies that promote unsustainable practices, especially in energy, water, road transport and agriculture.

- Eliminate wasteful and/or harmful subsidies and incentives.

- Adopt a set of uniform sustainability indicators at the national level, e.g., Bellagio principles, as the key elements of a project's credit analysis.

- Mobilize national and international philanthropy and charitable organizations in support of sustainable development.

- Set up mechanisms to facilitate access of non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and local authorities to available national and international funding sources.

- Promote win-win strategies by investing in people, particularly women, to promote efficient use of resources.

- Create national environmental funds using government-backed bonds.

- Tax individuals and industry based on the size of their greenhouse gas emissions.

Social development

- Integrate sustainable development principles in national education curricula at all levels, identify and support programmes for incorporating sustainable livelihoods into mainstream employment priorities.

- Involve consumers in certification of the environmental quality of products and bring civil society inputs into the setting of national standards for certification.

- Create and administer a national people's Earth fund to serve as a central conduit, performing supportive functions and promoting an exchange of mutual assistance among similar community-level friends.

- Collect statistics for early warning of environmental health problems.

- Identify and publicize national sources of persistent organic pollutants and other toxic dangers.

- Include the concept of sustainable development in negotiations on social security and employment.

- Incorporate land and gender into national policy structures.

Energy

- Raise fossil fuel prices to reflect the frill cost of problems caused by motor vehicles, e.g., pollution, accidents and congestion.

- Suppress asymmetrical subsidies, soft loans, tax breaks and other incentives for conventional and nuclear fuels.

- Include external costs in planning for any energy investment.

- Shift towards environmentally safe, efficient and cost-effective energy sources using, in particular, renewable and clean technologies.

- Implement energy-efficiency programmes together with all supply-side investment.

- Negotiate a legally binding agreement at Kyoto in December 1997 to address the threat of climate change, including clear and viable targets and timetables for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.

Science and technology

- Set up a database for results of past research on science and technology for sustainable development.

- Remove impediments to the sharing of environmentally superior technologies and build capacity for technological adaptation.

- Create environmental technology investment corporations.

Human settlements

- Develop low-cost and integrated housing programmes offering long-term credit to families and interest rates lower than the market and according to family income.

- Encourage better governance and management of human settlements.

- Encourage the development and use of local building materials.

- Encourage the development of best practices and enable the sharing of successful experiences.

- Encourage the development of indicators and benchmarks to allow for the monitoring and evaluation of projects.

Information and communication

- Invest in the Internet capacity as the most economical way of narrowing the information gap between rich and poor.

- Use the Internet and mass media programming and advertising in campaigns to raise public awareness about sustainable development.

- Reinforce civil society's leadership role in the effective use of information and communication technology for sustainable development.

At the regional level

Ecosystems and natural resources

- Enter partnerships to interpret and apply global environmental accords in the regional context.

- Strengthen environmental standards and ensure their effective implementation throughout a region.

- Take a bioregional approach to ecosystem management, especially for critical transboundary issues like water and nomadic livestock systems.

Economic development and financial systems

- Research and publicize the adverse impact of regional trade agreements and ensure effective people's participatory decision-making, transparency and effective monitoring of all aspects of regional trade and investment.

- Impose effective constraints, including a code of conduct, on the operations of transnational corporations to ensure their accountability and responsibility to the people of the region.

- Ensure that regional trade agreements have the mandate and institutional mechanisms to ensure sustainable development.

- Create a rural women's fund supported by the African Development Bank and the Inter-Arab Bank.

- Consolidate regional planning in relation to the pardon and/or exchange of debt negotiated in previous agreements, particularly the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative which permits an 80 per cent reduction in debt if sustainable development is undertaken.

At the global level

- Improve the effectiveness of the implementation of global accords through education, training and enhanced access to information.

- Use clear and precise language in international agreements to avoid ambiguity in interpretation and the resultant delay in implementation.

- Support quality environmental journalism to strengthen implementation of sustainable development global accords.

- Strengthen collaboration among developing and industrialized country non-governmental organizations for implementation of sustainable development global accords.

- Eliminate duplication of programmes and activities among international secretariats for sustainable development global accords.

- Focus attention on climate change mitigation as a priority by calling upon Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for a 20 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2005 for industrialized countries (from 1990 levels). Those countries should also adopt financial mechanisms for greenhouse gas offsets.

- Assess efforts by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to adopt a multilateral agreement on investment with a view to ensuring that new rules for promoting foreign direct investment do not undermine

legitimate environmental and sustainable development policies at the national, regional and international levels.

- Promote sustainable development impact assessments by coalitions of non-governmental organizations and industry of the implementation and further elaboration of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

- Ensure that the social and economic benefits associated with the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity are directed towards the world's poor and to the creation of genetic banks, particularly in situ, for future generations.

- Conduct public consultation with regard to the local and international implications of implementing international agreements and accords.

- Hold an annual international forum at the United Nations to facilitate the genuine participation of civil society, Governments and business to review and monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21.

- Support and contribute to the implementation of the recommendations of the major United Nations conferences.

International agencies

- Ensure participation of representatives of civil society as observers and providers of expertise in the policy-making institutions of the World Trade Organization and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

- Ensure that World Trade Organization rules promote and do not undermine legitimate environmental and sustainable development policies at the national, regional and international levels, including trade-related measures in multilateral environmental agreements.

- Expand and strengthen the role of the United Nations Environment Programme to promote the coherent implementation and monitoring of the environmental dimensions of sustainable development within the United Nations system and reassess the roles of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme in environmental technology and capacity-building.

- Take urgent action to ensure the financial security of the United Nations Environment Programme and to resolve the current governance crisis.

Trade and finance

- Create partnerships between non-governmental organizations and national Governments to monitor and evaluate the link between sustainable development and global trade, particularly World Trade Organization issues.

- Establish an intergovernmental panel in trade under the Commission on Sustainable Development.

- Develop and adopt codes of conduct for international business that include a commitment to conduct all operations openly and to the strictest standards they encounter in any country.

- Seek new financial mechanisms to support sustainable development objectives, e.g., tradable permits, taxes on financial transactions (Tobin tax), and taxes on fuel used in all international aviation, including military.

- Increase official development assistance tc 0.7 per cent of gross national product and monitor flows to ensure compatibility with Agenda 21 mandates.

- Direct existing and enhanced levels of funding towards sustainable development objectives, including robust replenishment of the Global Environment Facility and the International Development Association and financing the United Nations Development Programme's Capacity 21.

- Review mandates of international organizations to ensure their consistency.